

# The Chronicle

of the Early American Industries Association, Inc.

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Number 2

## THE SHELBURNE MUSEUM

BY RALPH N. HILL

Sixty miles from the Canadian border among the green hills of Vermont, the new Shelburne Museum, established by Mr. and Mrs. J. Watson Webb, is forging a new chapter in the story of early American life. The Museum is an exponent of New England, but more particularly of the Green Mountain State, which achieved its identity during the Revolution as an independent Republic and joined the Union as the fourteenth state in 1791.

The buildings that compose the growing village have that spare beauty characteristic also of the arts and crafts of pioneers who chose a rugged climate and uncompromising terrain. In this respect the Shelburne Museum is unique and well complements such among its predecessors as Williamsburg and Greenfield Village. Essentially a preservation, the Museum began its work none too soon. Had its building program not been under way in 1949 when the State decided to replace with a concrete structure its last double-lane covered bridge with a footpath, it is certain that this kind of Vermont landmark would have disappeared entirely. The 168-foot bridge was moved and re-erected timber by timber at the Museum, so that visitors, leaving Route 7, drive through it to reach the Museum grounds.

Uncared for, the Stagecoach Inn from Charlotte, a few miles south of Shelburne, might not have lasted through another decade of Vermont weather. But the Inn now stands with dignity on the Museum grounds among old lilac and apple trees as plumb as it did in 1749, five years before the death of Ethen Allen. Similarly, the early nineteenth century brick schoolhouse from Vergennes must have been lost to admirers of New England architecture, had it not found a future at the Museum. And the so-called Dutton House, 1782, from Cavendish, one of the few salt-box houses ever built in northwestern New England, was likewise fortunate to be rescued for future generations. The same can be said for the Shaker Shed, the Stone House and other buildings either already at the Museum or about to be moved.

The Horseshoe Barn, modeled after a barn near St. Albans, is one of the very few buildings that are not preservations, yet it might just as well have been. Its framework and rafters are all hand-hewn and came from two mills and eleven old Vermont barns. The external appearance of these buildings with their lack of

adornment, situated as they would have been in an early Vermont town, is thus one of authentic antiquity. They have that look of modest simplicity which has always been the hallmark of the rural architecture of early New England.

But buildings do not in themselves make a museum. It is the tastefully arranged collections of Mr. and Mrs. Webb in which antiquarians have expressed their fullest satisfaction. Eagles, figureheads, trade signs, cigar store Indians, weathervanes, decoys and wood carvings are combined in the Stagecoach Inn to make one of America's most distinguished collections of folk art. In this, as in the collections housed in the other buildings, the emphasis has not been on large numbers of items in any one category, but in the quality of a few carefully selected pieces. Thus the displays in the basement, on the first and on the second floor, which has the traditional ballroom extending across the whole east side of the Inn, have a refreshing variety that coaxes the visitor into more than a hasty inspection.

Noteworthy in the folk art collection are the figureheads Columbia and George Washington and the Schimmel wood carvings. There is an eagle with a sixteen-foot wingspread that came from the marine base at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and another eagle, dating from the late 18th or early 19th century. Two of the cigar store Indians wear an unusual head-dress bearing a carved eagle. In the attic of the Inn are stored hand-carved animals that await assembly on a steam-driven carrousel with calliope, for which the Museum recently secured a new boiler. This will be placed in operation exactly as it appeared in the late 1800's as soon as some of the other tasks in the current building program are completed.

The so-called Variety Unit might be called the heart of the Shelburne Museum because several separate collections are housed in structures adjoining a brick building native to its present location. Here one finds the pewter room, the glass and china and an extensive collections of dolls of many periods, as well as mechanical toys. The Country Store, containing hundreds of items of early American industry, is also in one of the buildings of the Variety Unit. Presently it will find a new location in a brick building (formerly the Shelburne Post Office) that was recently moved to the Museum. Not the last of the displays in the Variety Unit are the Hat and Fragrance and Quilt rooms, paneled in old pine

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pickets from a fence that surrounds the Webb's Shelburne Farms, bordering on the Museum. The Hat Room, whose walls are decorated with panels made from old hat boxes, contains a colorful assortment of early millinery, while a hundred counterpane, patchwork, applique and handwoven quilts adorn a large adjoining room.

Arts of the household are not emphasized at the Shelburne Museum to the exclusion of industry, trade and transportation. Opposite the Variety Unit in the Stone House, moved from Hinesburg and decorated as it would have been by a Vermont family of modest means in 1840, is found a display of early butter and cheese making equipment. These are exhibited in the basement because an early tenant of the house made her living churning butter.

The Shaker Shed from East Canterbury, New Hampshire, to the west of the Variety Unit, exhibits on the ground floor wagons and sleighs from one of the Museum's most prominent collections, while the second floor is currently being prepared for the display of the Wildung collection of early American and foreign wood-working tools, numbering over 1600 items. A selection of these were on display at the EAIA meeting held in Washington in 1951, so members are already acquainted with their character and scope. Here too is the Shannon Harness Shop Collection, so complete that a harness maker could engage in his trade at the Museum. An American Shoemaker's Shop, dating 1830 and containing 70 wood lasts, is another adjunct of the Shannon and Wildung collections. These in turn complement a collection of early iron.

The two-story Horseshoe Barn is not too large to hold the Museum's fleet of carriages, wagons and sleighs. Many of these were formerly used by members of the Webb and Vanderbilt families in this country and in Europe and represent the highest attainments in the art of carriage-making. It is difficult to mention only one or two because so many of them have unique histories and characteristics. For example, however, the Liberty Coach was built in Paris by the famous makers Million and Guet and is an exact copy of an English Mail Coach. In 1901 Alfred Vanderbilt and James Hasen Hyde made a run which broke all records from New York to Philadelphia and return in 19 hours and 35 minutes; 76 horses were placed in strategic places along the route to enable them to accomplish this record.

A Concord Coach built in 1852 and considered to be in very good condition for its age was built for the Highland and Alpine Houses in New Hampshire and ran for many decades in the White Mountains. There is the dog sleigh which made the record run from Little Creek through Nome, Alaska over the ice of Norton Bay (a distance of 170 miles) to pick up the diphtheria serum which was being rushed from the medical centers of the United States to combat the Alaskan epidemic of 1924. Another important sleigh is one bearing a tank used by the Standard Oil Company to deliver kerosene in the early days. The variety of horse-drawn vehicles from the most modest to the most elegant, each a monument to the ingenuity of some early builder, is impossible to describe briefly.

Another facet of transportation represented at the

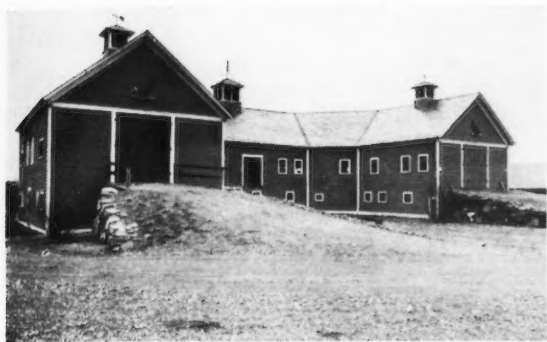
Museum is that of the sidewheel steamboat, whose history has now sunk to a whisper on the inland waterways of the country. From the top of the Colchester Reef Lighthouse (which was dismantled from a rock in the middle of Lake Champlain after being declared obsolete by the Coast Guard, and moved to the Museum in 1952) one can see Shelburne Bay, the site of a Yankee shipyard since shortly after the War of 1812. For generations captains, engineers, ship carpenters and blacksmiths lived at Shelburne Harbor building and running on Lake Champlain a long line of steamboats which carried the people and their goods on this northern waterway. Thus it is logical that the marine character of the township of Shelburne should be represented at the Museum. The stone Vermont House will contain a retired captain's room. The lighthouse will display mementos of Lake Champlain. The Stagecoach Inn already has a fine collection of Bard primitives of early sidewheelers that steamed on eastern waters.

Unique in itself as a floating museum with its richly paneled interior and stenciled ceilings, old barbershop, ship models and hundreds of marine prints and photographs, the veteran sidewheeler *Ticonderoga* meanwhile plies the Lake on regular summer excursion and charter trips under the ownership and direction of the Museum. Built in 1906 the *Ticonderoga* is considered the finest example of an inland water steamboat remaining of the hundreds of such vessels that formerly dotted the waterways. There is, other than the *Ticonderoga*, only one other sidewheel passenger packet left in America that is driven by the traditional "walking beam" engine, and it will interest EAIA members to know that a fine iron rooster rides the walking beam, true to the traditions of Lakes Champlain and George. Artisans who could duplicate the ship carpentry that may be found on the *Ticonderoga* where nothing is square or level, have virtually disappeared. But the plea of the Steamship Historical Society of America and other nautical associations—that some one example of the sidewheel steamboat be preserved—has been answered. The *Ticonderoga* will never be scrapped and the steamboat, one of America's original contributions to architecture, will not become extinct.

Such is the scope of the Shelburne Museum, which owes its impetus to the Webb family in general and in particular to Mrs. J. Watson Webb. The Museum represents to her the culmination of a lifetime of collecting and preserving. To professional antiquarians and to the visiting public the Museum represents something excitingly new and boldly original, a preservation that will assume ever-added importance with the oncoming years.

"It is said, the American scythes and axes are better than the British, because the Americans use the best foreign iron for the purpose, while the British manufacturers are, perhaps, too careless as to the materials they use, taking the readiest or the cheapest sorts of iron. Manufacturers in general are too inattentive to the goodness or fitness of the raw materials they use. However, the New-England axes having got a great character, large quantities before the revolt were made in Britain like them, were sent to America, and sold as New-England axes, and answered as well." J. Sheffield, 1784.

*Observations on the Commerce of the American States.*



### SCENES AT SHELBURNE MUSEUM

Upper left, The Horseshoe Barn; made from timbers of two old mills and eleven old Vermont barns and containing a notable collection of carriages, wagons and sleighs.

Upper right, The Old Stage Coach Inn; built in 1784, it was moved from Charlotte, Vermont to its present location and now houses a part of Mrs. Webb's fine collection of folk art.

Center, The *Ticonderoga*; one of the few surviving side wheel steam boats with "walking beam" engine.

Lower left, The Covered Bridge; In the process of re-erection after having been moved to Shelburne from its position on the Lamoille River.

Lower right, The Stone House; from Hinesburg, Vermont is representative of a Vermont home of the 1840's



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# REMARKS ON IRON COLLECTING

BY HENRY J. KAUFFMAN

The collecting of objects made of metal in the handcraft era of our country has been the avocation of many people and one of the major responsibilities of the great museums of our country. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts has a fine collection of objects made of silver, the Brooklyn Museum has an outstanding collection of articles made of pewter, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art has an interesting collection of guns made in Pennsylvania. These objects have been undoubtedly collected because they are the evidence of the skill and ingenuity of our ancestors in creating useful and aesthetically pleasing objects. Now, however, some attention is being focused on the fact that while objects of pewter and silver were being saved from the junk pile and the scrap dealer, many iron pieces escaped the eye of the discriminating owner; that wrought iron hinges and cast iron stove plates were being thrown into the crucible to be reshaped into a shell or an automobile fender which seemed to have more utility in the day's economy.

The reason for the ruthless demolition of these iron objects can be easily understood, for until recent times even informed people considered them quite worthless. Stove plates and firebacks were sold for nominal sums, and old axes were sold from a dark corner in antique shops for fractions of a dollar. Although trivets and toasters were better thought of, only lighting devices made of iron, iron andirons and a few other articles that had a clear use in a collection or a fireplace attained much stature among antiques.

The humble character of these objects of iron further encouraged their obscurity. It is true that some elegant and sophisticated articles were made by skilled artisans; but the bulk of them, made by less imaginative craftsmen, more nearly fit the category of folk art, which might be briefly described as simple, functional art usually relegated to objects of household utility. At best, an iron ladle with incised designs on the handle and fillets filed in the curves does not evoke much enthusiasm on the part of many people; its aesthetic quality cannot be compared with a fine lock on a gun or a silver tankard with a cork-screw thumb-piece and a splayed finial on the handle.

Further minimizing the importance of iron to collectors and museums has been the ambiguity of its origin. The similarity of the work of European and American craftsmen is well known, and in no medium is positive differentiation more difficult than in iron. Documentary evidence indicates that much iron hardware used in America in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was imported from abroad. Meager evidence based on the ledgers of blacksmiths shows that in America most of their work was of the repair type and that rarely did they engage in the production of sets of hardware for houses or similar projects. There is some evidence that H hinges and other items were made in the big cities, but most of the objects that collectors seek today seem to have been made in England or on the continent. This lack of conclusive identification has caused much con-

cern among collectors, and there is a universal and intensive search for iron objects that can be called "marked American."

Not until some method is devised to differentiate between the iron article made in America and those made in Europe will the medium be on the par with silver, pewter, and copper.

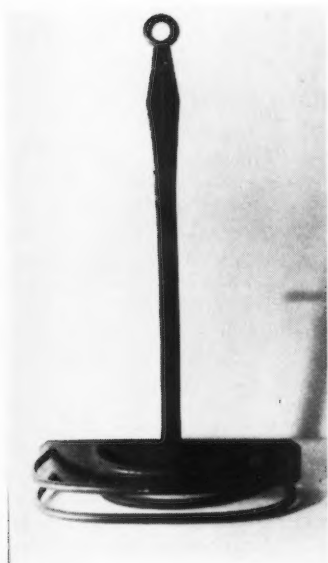
Despite the lack of positive identification, it is obvious to all who sell and collect antiques that interest in objects made of iron is now reaching an all-time high. This interest can be partially accounted for by the utility of the objects. One can have a reasonably good collection without any clutter or dust in his house, for they can all be installed and used. Despite overwhelming enthusiasm for the ranch-type homes, Cape Cod and other colonial styles are quite popular, and many of the owners yearn for a tulip latch on the cellar door. H hinges are attractive on many of the doors and a trivet always seems to look well on the hearth. So rampant is the restoration mania that there has been created additional demand for old hardware and fittings such as foot-scrappers, weather-vanes and door knockers. The demand is easily proved by all the gift shoppes that sell peened hardware to the uninformed and by a few competent craftsmen who are making honest reproductions for those who want the best.

The current wave of patriotism sweeping the country also contributes to the interest in objects of iron. Early America enthusiasts are swarming to restored villages where they see the old blacksmith shops and sometimes can buy a few pieces made by the blacksmith. A number of iron furnaces are being reconstructed, the most famous being the old iron works at Saugus, Massachusetts, where visitors will soon be able to see how a seventeenth century iron works operated. There will be a blast furnace, forge, finery, and slitting mill with other adjuncts such as the home of the iron master and the charcoal sheds. In Pennsylvania the original eighteenth century Cornwall Furnace continues to attract crowds as does the restored Hopewell Village near Reading.

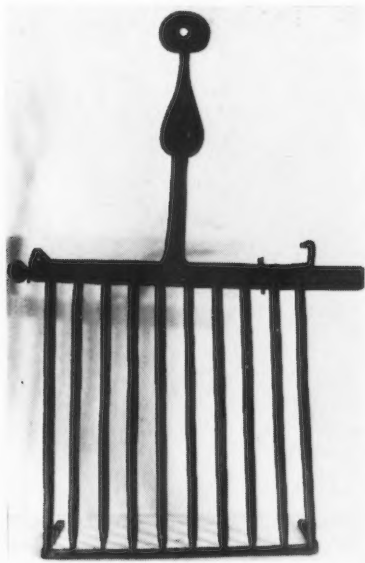
It has been the experience of the writer that most collectors and students of the subject have a number of leads that might aid in the identifying of maker's marks. Extremely few of these marks are known to be those of American craftsmen, but it is reasonable to assume that some of them are. The illustrations show a few objects found in New England and Pennsylvania bearing the name or initials of the maker. One of them is stamped Whitfield, three pieces are known with his stamp, but his place of residence is unknown. The incidence of his work points toward New Haven, but this is only a hypothesis.

All of the articles pictured on the opposite page are from the authors collection except the grid-iron which is from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Rothschild, and the teakettle which is from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln Mitchell.





Toaster, Meade and Havens



Gridiron, P. B., 1822



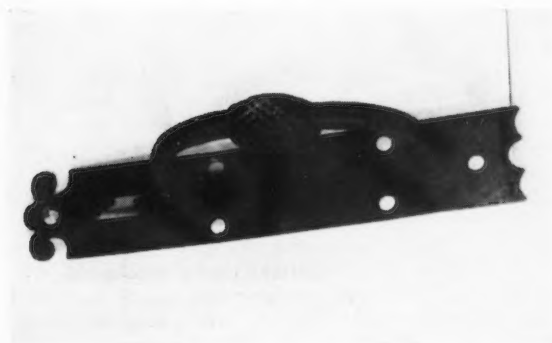
Goose wing axe, F. B.



Iron porringers, Kendrick and Bellvue



Iron tea kettle, Whitfield



Latch, Isbel & Co.



Trap, Hylane

## CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ART IN AN EARLY TOOL CHEST

BY W. PARKER CRUTCHFIELD  
*Colonial Williamsburg*

"The man who built that must have been a bachelor," announced a lady tourist who was seeing the eighteenth century cabinet maker's tool chest on exhibition at the Ayscough Shop in Colonial Williamsburg. She looked admiringly and a bit enviously at the mahogany veneered interior of the chest with its exquisite inlay of boxwood, ebony and striped tulip wood. How beautiful and yet how functional were the perfectly fitted dove-tailed drawers with brass drawer pulls. The drawers, numbering forty-eight in all, including the seventeen simulated ones to create grace and balance in design, fitted in four sliding removable sections. Each was designed to hold a specific tool—the bit stock carefully fitted in one, the almost infinite variety of carving tools in another, the mortise chisels and turning tools in another.

The builder was a master in more ways than one. "No wife," continued the enthralled lady, "would have been satisfied to let her husband keep such a beautiful object merely to keep tools in. So the man that built this must have been a bachelor."

"On the contrary, my dear," objected her husband, closing the chest lid as he spoke. The object of beauty and craftsmanship disappeared; now there could be seen only a large rectangular box, forty-two inches long, twenty-six inches wide and twenty-two inches tall. Around the bottom was a plain six inch moulding. To be sure, even with its worn coating of grey paint the careful dove-tailing of the corners was perceptible, yet it remained drab and unattractive.

"The builder purposely painted the outside, because this was his shipping chest, used to protect and guard his precious tools when he made a major move," continued her husband.

"Of course, if he were married, he knew that his wife would ignore such a dull thing as an ordinary deal tool chest painted gray." Actually the cabinet maker who created this work of functional art was a true master craftsman expressing his creative instincts and pride of workmanship in a useful way. This was not uncommon among eighteenth and early nineteenth century craftsmen.

Believed to have been built between 1765 and 1790 by an English craftsman, R. F. Matthews, this chest is an almost perfect example of the intensive pride which the early craftsmen took in their work. According to the tradition of the English family from which the American purchaser obtained it, the chest was in America during the 18th Century, went back to England about 1810 where it remained until discovered and was brought back to this country.

That these craftsmen in days gone by loved their tools is attested by the precision and care in detail which this chest's builder took in making a home for them. Sturdy and strongly built, the chest is basically of seven eighths inch deal (An English or Scandinavian pine or fir) with three permanently built in compartments running lengthwise inside on the bottom, while back and front, resting on the outside bottom compartments or tiers of two removable sections. These will slide indi-

dually toward the center to allow entrance to the bottom sections on which they rest. These four sections can be entirely removed, forming individual chests themselves. In each of these sections, with the exception of the saw compartment, there are balanced rows of little drawers, veneered on their faces with mahogany and inlaid with strips of ebony and boxwood. These drawers, which have brass pulls, face each other and open by pulling toward the center. To balance the design there are nine false drawer fronts on the side of the saw compartment, each appearing exactly like the drawers in the other compartments. All the visible surfaces within the chest are veneered with mahogany and inlaid with borders of box, ebony and striped tulip wood. Directly on the inside front of the chest is a narrow tray fitted so that it will pull upward and come completely out. In this tray is contained a mahogany square, several bevel squares, drawing curves, (one with a plumb bob combined in it) these also of mahogany.

The inside of the top of the chest is mahogany veneer with a border of tulipwood, ebony and box wood all around, showing the influence of Hepplewhite and Sheraton. The top is fastened to the chest with brass butt hinges.

The transformation of the chest, from its solid drabness, when closed, to its amazing beauty when opened is startling and refreshing, like a sudden shaft of sunlight piercing a dull, murky sky.

The work of a master, who had labored long years learning his craft is everywhere evident—in the precise perfection of the dove-tailing of the drawers, the studied care in arrangement, the delicate, yet positive design of inlay.

No less interesting than the chest itself are the traditional cabinetmakers tools which it contains—though many of the originals are missing. The saws, planes, squares, gauges, spoke shaves, drills, chisels, carving tools, hammers, calipers, compasses, scratch awls, and turning tools bespeak, in themselves the skill, rather than the oft thought crudeness of the workman of bygone days. The tools date from the middle eighteenth Century to the first quarter of the nineteenth Century, many of them undoubtedly having been made by the craftsmen themselves, while others bear the names of famous English tool makers.

On many of these tools appears the name of R. F. Matthews, believed to be the maker of the chest; on others there appear the names of both Matthews and F. Newton. And on some of the latter ones only the name of F. Newton.

Among the tools there is a compass plane, for planing concave surfaces, which has attached to the far end of the stock, a sliding device for adjusting the front of the sole so that the plane will work on more than one radius. There is a trammel compass beautifully made of box wood and ivory; several intriguing calipers for both inside and outside measurement; and an iron plated joiner's plane (about 1800) the stock of which is made of ebony.

In fact there are one or two tools apparently made by Matthews for some special purpose which, so far,



Outside view of tool chest showing painted deal surface. Notice its simple drab appearance.

Found in one drawer containing only slightly used mortise chisels were two invoices which follow. The first is from John Lund, Plane Maker, Wholesale and Retail, London Road, Southwark, England . . . (Not dated)

1 Sett of Best Slipt Beads, Doubl Box	1 £ 13s
1 Best Plough and 10 Irons	15s 2d
1 Best Stock and 33 Brown	
Bits and Collars	
1 Sett Mortas Chs	
	2 £ 8s 2d"

The second is from: "John Mosley and Son, Plane, Tool Chest and Mechanical Manufacturers, No. 16, New Street, Covent Garden, London, February 19, 1819.

Stock Bits	1 £ 10s 6d
Mortise Locks	2s 6d
Sash filister	10s
Doz Gauges	4s 9d
2 dbl bent bitt	1s 1d
Dado groove Plane	7s
7 Turkey slips . . . (Stones)	9s
2 pair handscrews	12s 1d
	4 £ 2s 11d"

have defied identification. Of moulding, rabetting, and tongue and groove planes there are some eighty in all. The styles of the mouldings which can be cut with these planes extends from those of the eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, with the use of the Cyma curve quite frequent. The irons in these planes are both hand froged and cast steel, all of it excellent, as was the steel of the early tools. Included among the moulding planes are a dozen delightful little coach maker's planes—not nearly so common as the often seen moulding planes.

Among the miscellany of odds and ends scattered within the chest are the little intimate objects which aid the imagination in recreating a picture of these craftsmen, R. Matthews and F. Newton who used and treasured these tools and chest—The steel punches for stamping their names on valued tools, samples and mouldings cut in Santo Domingo mahogany, hand made paper lining the bottom of drawers, patterns for unknown uses, hand cut brass screws, number punches and letter stencils.

But most fascinating of all is a small card on which is written, apparently in pencil, the following: "Benja-

A few of the tools contained in the Matthew's Tool Chest. Here can be seen mahogany squares, bevel squares, miters, and curves. Note that the large square has an arrangement for converting it into a level by the addition of a plumb bob. The two large planes pictured are an iron boxed ebony try-plane and a compass plane with adjustable fore end. The two small planes are coach maker's planes adapted to cutting mouldings on curved surfaces. Also included are gauges, carving tools, and a remarkable trammel compass of box wood and ivory.



# The Chronicle

## Early American Industries Association, Inc.

The purpose of the association is to encourage the study and better understanding of early American industry, in the home, in the shop, on the farm, and on the sea, and especially to discover, identify, classify, preserve and exhibit obsolete tools, implements, utensils, instruments, vehicles, appliances and mechanical devices used by American craftsmen, farmers, housewives, mariners, professional men, and other workers.

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Communications regarding the contents of The Chronicle should be addressed to the Editor; regarding back numbers to Loring McMillen; suggestions for members to any of the Officers; all other matters to the President. Addresses as here given.

### DUES

The annual dues are payable January 1st, and are as follows. Regular members \$5.00; Supporting members, \$7.50; Sustaining members, \$10.00 and up. There is no distinction between classes, except the amount of dues, but The Chronicle cannot be financed unless a considerable number of the members pay more than \$5.00. Each member is expected to voluntarily place himself in the class which represents the amount he is willing to contribute to the support of the Association for the current year. Life membership costs \$50.00. The Chronicle is sent to all members without additional charge.

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The Matthew's Tool Chest opened showing the beautifully veneered surfaces and sliding compartments with drawers.

min Banks, Salisbury, 1789. Fecit." Something to conjure with: who was Benjamin Banks. Fecit: "He made it." Made what? A piece of furniture? A tool? These are the intriguing questions which fascinate and set the mind racing backward.

Ghosts of a bygone era appear; ghosts of honest, skillful craftsmen, artists in the same sense as the builders of the great cathedrals, the painters of matchless pictures, the composers of undying music; men exhibiting in their daily tasks the creative desire which distinguishes man from the other animals. These men from day to day were builders and designers of civilization.

The first Printing Office and newspaper publication to be established north of the Ohio River and west of the Allegheny Mountains in the old North-West Territory was established in 1793 by William Maxwell. Maxwell was born in New Jersey in 1755 and after fighting for American Independence in the Revolution he moved west and established himself in Lexington, Kentucky. In 1793 he moved across the Ohio to Cincinnati and on November 9 of that year printed Volume 1, of the "Centinel of the North-West Territory."

Printing in the Americas, John Clyde Oswald, pp 325-326.



# Early American Industries

## OF TOOLS I SING, AND WHY WE MADE 'EM WHEN OLD GREAT BRITAIN WOULDN'T TRADE 'EM

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LAWRENCE B. ROMAINE

(Dr. Nathaniel Ames. The Almanac for 1768.)  
"Reader: Custom and Fashion, which the World blindly follows, right or wrong, must be followed by Almanac-makers as well as others; otheriwse, I might have saved myself the Trouble of Writing, and you of Reading, a formal Preface, and filled this Page with a Table of Interest, or something that might assist you in Business. But, to Prevent you're going to sleep over it .....etc."

Dr. Ames realized, even in 1768, that the average reader is more interested in his or her own hobby than in anything else. Readers of the Chronicle are quite naturally more interested in collections of tools and inventions, and in discoveries and explanations of their manufacture and use. However, with this 1768 apology to back me up, I shall endeavour to present what I feel is a necessary and important background for the thorough understanding of all Colonial manufactures. Others, with a greater mechanical knowledge of early tools, have written and will write again accurate descriptions of specimens. It is my hope that many of you have not had the opportunity of reading the following contemporary accounts of the efforts to develop American tools just before the Revolution.

Dr. Ames, like most of the Colonial astronomers, was not only a scientist but a historian, poet, wit and author rolled into one. He had the knack of entertaining and teaching at the same time. Let us take a look at another page of his 1768 Almanac and visualize Boston awakening to cold facts in terms of complete dependence on imports:-

"Save your Money, and Save your Country!

At a Legal and full Meeting of the Freeholders of the Town of Boston on the 20th of October, 1767, the following Votes were Passed unanimously:

Whereas the excessive use of Foreign Superfluities is the chief cause of the present distressed state of this Town, as it is thereby drained of its money; which misfortune is likely to be increased by the late additional Burthens and Importations on the Trade of the Province; which threatens the Country with Poverty and Ruin:

Therefore, Voted, that this Town will take all prudent and legal measures to encourage the Produce and Manufactures of this Province, and to lessen the Use of Superfluities, and particularly the following enumerated Articles imported from Abroad Viz:- Loaf sugar, Anchors, Cordage, Coaches, Chaises and Carriages of all sorts, Horse Furniture, Men and Womens Hatts, Apparel ready made, Household furniture, Gloves, Shoes, Sole Leather, Shething and Deck Nails, Gold and Silver Thread of all sorts, Gold and Silver Buttons, Wrought Plate of all sorts, Diamond, Stone and Paste Ware, Snuff, Mustard, Clocks and Watches, Silversmiths and Jewelers Ware, Broad Cloths that cost above 10s. per yard, Muffs, Furs, Tippetts and all sorts of Millinery Ware, Starch, Womens and Childrens Stays, Fire Engines, China Ware, Silk and Cotton Velvets, Gauze, Pewterers hollow Ware, Linsced Oyl, Glue, Lawns, Cambrics, Silks, Malt Liquors and Cheese.

And, wheras it is the opinion of this Town that divers new Manufactures may be set up in America, to great Advantage, and some others carried to a greater extent, particularly those of Glass and Paper . . .etc."

I do not mean to imply that 1768 was the beginninnig of American invention, Yankee ingenuity and effort or the manufacture of American tools. It was however a period when necessity inspired greater efforts toward better tools and more of them with a very real danger to back it up and the greatest incentive in the World behind it—freedom.

How often have you looked at a pair of 18th century sugar cutters and wondered when they were made, American or English? Run down the list. We were importing anchors in 1768, and yet we have all seen many in our museums that were made in New England forges. Think of all the tools represented in the making of these British importations. How good were they before 1768 and what improvements were made in them during these rough and ready times? Remember, I promised only a word picture of the times—something to place with your pre-revolutionary coach-jack. "Hatt' form, cobbler's bench, anvil, button mould, spoon mould and pewterers' decorator. For the tools themselves with accurate data you must go to Williamsburg, Cooperstown, Old Sturbridge, Shelburne and our many other Museums who can answer your question about practically everything.

(1769 Dr. Ames. The Almanack.)

"A Gentleman, whom Posterity will Bless, has deposited 100 dollars in the Hands of the Select Men of Boston, to be divided in Premiums among those of Massachusetts Bay, who in the year 1771 shall have raised the greatest Number of Mulberry Trees."

(1770. Dr. Ames. The Almanack)

"The Great Encourager of American Manufactures now wears Stockings made of Silk entirely raised and manufactured among us, so that such Ladies (if any we have) as think themselves of too delicate a Mould to apply their Hands to the Distaff, or Cloath their House in Scarlet from the Tender Fleece, may find a very "genteel Employment, for one Month in the Year, in assisting at the Curious Operation of Nature in the Production of Silk Worms; and for their further Encouragement, will inform them that they may soon be furnished with Cups and Saucers, equal to the best China Ware imported, for Sipping their Soul Enchanting Tea, without molestation, from the Plants too, I hope, said to be Growing in America: for all the Materials are discovered amongst us, & Manufactures are preparing them for making China Ware in Boston where the best of green and Tortoiseshell Ware is already made: Callicoes are printed there; Preparations are now making for several new Manufactures. The People are determined no longer to neglect the One Thing Needful for their Political Salvation."

Are you dozing already, or do these quotations straight from the old American hand made paper and printers ink stir you to know more about the new tools

## The Chronicle

that were being introduced to break down British restrictions and taxes? Can you hear the cheers at the Boston meetings and the murmurings beside the old fireplaces in the evenings when they read from the next Almanac:-

"The Old Slitting Mill formerly owned by Mr. Jackson at Milton, which has long been out of repair, is now in good order and will cut Iron in a few days: those Persons who will send Iron to the Mill may have it cut for 6 pounds, 12s, 4d per Ton, which is 4 pounds cheaper per Ton than ever it was cut before.

James Boies.

The Paper Mill there is still in want of Rags."

Can you make believe you hear the hum of industry? Or do I grow dull and juvenile? I'm not sure I can hear it, but I can look at my dne wall and at our 1740 fireplace and imagine that the pipe tongs were made in 1768, the swivel pot hook ca. 1769, those sugar cutters about 1770, the bullet moulds all just before the Revolution or during it, the smiths' tongs surely bog iron and American not to forget several other "superfluities" and the tools that must have made them—right here in New England! I hope your imagination is as good as mine, and that you won't blame this rambling on your poor Editor.

I hope Dr. Ames has appealed to you in his support of American Manufactures as he has to me. I hope my few quotations will make all of our Members work even harder to run down names of American artisans in this period and to double their research. An unknown tool with no date might as well go to the scrap heap as far as posterity is concerned, and yet we all have them. Lets get to work and dig. If the "Boys of '76" had the guts and courage to make them in spite of all odds, we ought to have the sticktoitiveness to find out who, how and when they did it.

### VERSATILE CRAFTSMEN?

"David and William Geddy, Smiths in Williamf-burg, near the Church, having all manner of Utenfils requisite, carrying on the Gun-Smith's, Cutler's and Founder's Trade, at whose shop maybe had the following work viz., *Gun Work*, fuch as Gun and Pistol Stocks, plain or neatly varnished, Locks and Mountings, Barrels blued, bored, and rifled; *Founders Work*, and Harnesis Buckles, Coach Nobs, Hinges, Squares, Nails, and Bul-lion, curious Brafs Fenders and Fire Dogs, Houfe Bells of all fizes, Dials calculatod to any latitude; *Cutler's Work*, as Razors, Lancets, Shears, and Surgeon's In-ftruments ground, cleaned and glazed as well as when firft made, Sword Blades and Sights for Surveyor's Com-pafes, Rupture Bands of different forts, particularly a fort which gives admirable eafe in all kinds of Ruptures: likewife at the faid fhop may be had a Vermifuge..... which fafely and effectively deftroys all kinds of worms in horfes."

*Virginia Gazette*, August 8, 1751.

## SPRING MEETING

Members of the Early American Industries Association are reminded that our Spring Meeting will be held June 26 through June 28, inclusive. We are privileged to have as our meeting place, the Shelburne Museum at Shelburne, Vermont through the kind invitation of its founder, Mrs. J. Watson Webb.

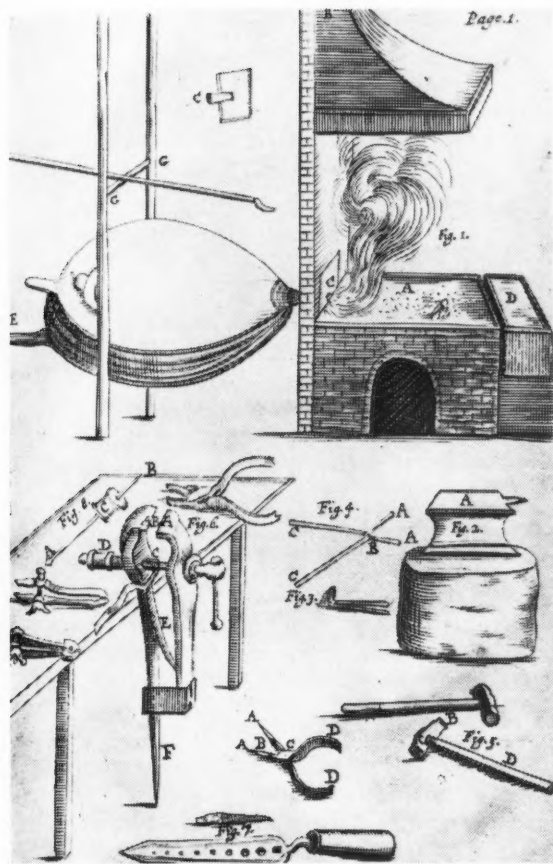
Our lead article for this issue of the Chronicle describes some of the many things to be found at Shelburne which are of paramount interest to members of this association. It is possible that we will have the opportunity to make a trip on beautiful Lake Cham-paign aboard the famous old "Ticonderoga." This experience in itself will be well worth the trip to Shelburne.

At the time the Chronicle went to press no details on specific arrangements were available but information will be mailed at a later date.

## FROM THE EDITORS

As the April Issue of the Chronicle goes to press, the editors wish to express their gratitude to several members of the Early American Industries Association for their suggestions and contribution to this publication. Mr. Henry J. Kauffman has submitted two articles to the editors, one of which appears in this issue, and the other will appear in a coming edition. Mr. Lawrence Romaine has forwarded an excellent article along with many helpful suggestions and has indicated that he would supply additional information at any time it is requested. Mrs. Josephine Pierce has helped in many ways and has volunteered valuable information in the problem of publication. Mrs. J. Watson Webb and the Shelburne Museum have shown every consideration in providing our lead article for this issue. Mr. Thomas W. Fennell has supplied an article as has Mr. Rudolph P. Hommel. Miner Cooper has contributed valuable filler material. All of these contributors have our sincere thanks.

Your editors feel, however, that in order to have the kind of publication that our association can be proud of it is absolutely essential that there be a variety of articles to choose from for each issue in order to get a comprehensive coverage of the field in which the association has devoted itself. To date this has not been the case. The only articles received at the time of the April Issue are those mentioned above. Surely this is not representative of the knowledge that members have accumulated over a period of years; nor is it in keeping with the spirit of this organization that only a few members actively contribute. Your editors as a result of this lack of material have on occasion found it necessary to write in addition to edit the Chronicle in order to meet our deadline. We sincerely hope that we shall not have to do this in the future because it means we are forced to rely on writers no matter how qualified, who are not members of EAIA. Your kind cooperation in this matter would greatly improve the quality of the Chronicle and relieve your editors from this added responsibility which we are unwilling to accept.



## MORE FROM MOXON

*Mechanick Exercises, J. Moxon, London, 1703*

The *Hearth*, or Fire-place of the *Forge* marked A. (in Plate 1.) is to be built up from your floor with Brick about two foot and an half, or sometimes two foot nine Inches high, according to the purpose you design your *Forge* for; for if your *Forge* be intended for heavy work, for easiness of management, and so broad as you think convenient: It may be built with hollow Arches underneath, to set several things out of the way. The Back of the *Forge* is built upright to the top of the Ceiling, and inclosed over the Fire-place with a *Hovel*, which ends in a *Chimney* to carry away the Smoak, as B. In the back of the *Forge* against the Fire-place, is fixed a thick Iron plate, and a taper Pipe in it about five Inches long, called a *Tewel*, or (as some call it) a *Tewel-Iron* marked C, which Pipe comes through the Back of the *Forge*, as at C. Into this taper Pipe or *Tewel* is placed the Nose or Pipe of the *Bellows*. The Office of this *Tewel*, is only to preserve the Pipe of the *Bellows*, and the back of the *Forge* about the Fire-place from burning. Right against the Back is placed at about twenty Inches, or two foot distance, the *Trough*, and reaches commonly through the breadth of the *Forge*, and is as broad and deep as you

think good, as at D. The *Bellows* is placed behind the Back of the *Forge*, and hath as aforesaid, its Pipe fitted so that it move not upwards or downwards. At the Ear of the upper *Bellows* board is fastened a *Rope*, or sometimes a *Thong* of Leather, or an Iron Chain or Rod, as E; which reaches up to the *Rocker*, and is fastened there to the farther end of the Handle, as at F. This Handle is fastened across a *Rock-slab*, which moves between two Cheeks upon the *Center-pins*, in two Sockets as at G. So that by drawing down this Handle, the moving Board of the *Bellows* rises, and by a considerable weight set on the top of its upper Board sinks down again, and by this Agitation performs the Office of a pair of *Bellows*.

### Of the Anvil

The shape of a Black Smith's *Anvil* I have inserted in this Figure, though it is sometimes made with a *Pike*, or *Bickern*, or *Beak-iron*, at one end of it, whose use I shall shew you when I come to round hollow work. Its Face must be very flat and smooth, without Flaws, and so hard that *File will not touch it* (as Smiths say, when a File will not cut, or race it.) The upper Plain A. is called the *Face*; it is commonly set upon a wooden Block, that it may stand very steady and solid, that it may stand about two foot high from the Floor, or sometimes higher, according to the stature of the Person that is to work at it.

### Of the Tongs

There are two sorts of *Tongs* used by Smiths; The one the *Straight-nosed Tongs*, used when the work is short, and somewhat flat, and generally for all Plate Iron. The other *Crook-nosed Tongs*, to be used for forging small Bars, or such thicker work, as will be held within the Returns of their *Chaps*. The *Chaps* are placed near the Joint, because, that considering the length of the *Handles*, they hold the Iron faster than they would do, were they placed farther from the Joint, as in the Fig. 3. 4. A the *Chaps*, B the Joint, CC the *Handles*.

### Of the Hammer, and the Sledge.

There are several sorts of *Hammers* used by Black-Smiths; as first the *Hand-hammer*, which is sometimes bigger, or left, according to the Strength of the Workman; but it is a *Hammer* of such weight, that it may be wielded or governed, with one hand at the *Anvil*. Secondly, the *Up-hand Sledge*, used by under-Workmen, when the Work is not of the largest, yet requires help to batter, or draw it out; they use it with both their hands before them and seldom lift their *Hammer* higher than their head. Thirdly, the *About-Sledge* is the biggest *Hammer* of all, and is also used by under-Workmen, for the battering, or drawing out of the largest Work; and then they hold the farther end of the *Handle* in both their hands and swinging the *Sledge* above their Heads they at Arms end let fall as heavy a Blow as they can upon the Work. There is also another *Hammer* used by them, which they call a *Rivetting-hammer*. This is the smallest *Hammer* of all, and very rarely used at the *Forge*, unless your Work be very small; but upon cold Iron it is used for rivetting, or setting straight, or crooking small work. In fig. 5. A the Face, B the Pen, C the Eye, D the *Handle*.

(Continued on Page 12)

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## NEW MEMBERS

### CONNECTICUT

*Norwalk:* Richard K. Doan, 186 A Perry Ave., (1799)

### MISSOURI

*Osceola:* Glen E. Toalson (1802)

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

*Hanover:* Mrs. Cora McDewitt Wilson (1805)

*Pelham:* Mrs. Winston J. Hartley (1800)

### NEW JERSEY

*Montville:* Mrs. Oren F. Browning, Jr., Change Road (1803)

*Red Bank:* K. C. Larabee, 221 Spring Street (1801)

*Ridgewood:* Mary L. Woodward, 415 East Saddle River Road (1798)

### NEW YORK

*Cherry Valley:* Oskar Rusch (1797)

*Yonkers:* Lester Levy, 4 Birch Road (1804)

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Wilbur H. Glover, to 2275 Kensington Avenue, Snyder 21, N. Y.

Mrs. Sanford Meech, to Mohican Hotel, New London, Conn.

W. Allen Newell, to 415 Caroline St., Ogdensburg, N. Y.

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel B. Niederlander, to 169 Cayuga Road, Williamsville 21, N. Y.

R. D. St. John, to 829 Edinburgh Street, San Mateo, California

## MAIL RETURNED

Mrs. L. S. Cormack, 1 State Street, Schenectady, N. Y.

## DECEASED

Huyler Held, 149 Hill Park Ave., Great Neck, L. I. (1006)

Arnold Shircliffe, 410 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. (1663)

Mr. Albert Wells, La Jolla, California (24)

Mr. Wells, charter member of EAIA, who died in California on March 10th at the age of 80, will be best remembered by the Association as the founder of Old Sturbridge Village.

Associated with the American Optical Company for 59 years, Mr. Wells, with his two surviving brothers, Channing M. and J. Cheney Wells, guided its expansion from a comparatively small business in Southbridge, Mass., to a world leader in the manufacture of ophthalmic, optical and industrial safety products, and scientific instruments. He was successively a director, treasurer, trustee and chairman of the trustees.

Around 1925 Mr. Wells became interested in collecting early American domestic furnishings and implements. His brother Cheney, also started to collect early American clocks and paperweights. Over the years, the two brothers collected thousands of antiques, which were kept in Mr. Wells' home.

The ultimate disposition of the imposing collection posed a question in 1935, and it was decided to re-create

a typical country town of central New England as it might have appeared in the 19th Century. Old Sturbridge Village was opened to the public in 1946 and is visited annually by thousands of tourists, and others interested in Americana.

EAIA has been privileged to have three meetings at the Village, the first several years before the opening, when it was called Quinebaug Village; the others in October 1946, and June, 1950.

Mr. Wells has been living in California for several years, and his place on the board of directors of EAIA was taken by his daughter-in-law, Mrs. George B. Wells in 1950.

## MORE FROM MOXON

(Continued from Page 11)

### Of the Vice.

The *Vice* must be set up very firmly that it shake not, and stand upright with its *Chaps*, parallel or range with your *Work-bench*; because square filing, is a great piece of good Workmanship in a Smith; and should the *Vice* not stand upright, and range with the *Work-bench*, the *Chaps* pinching upon two square fides, would make the top side of your work either lean toward you, or from you; and consequently you filing (as a good Workman ought to do) upon the flat, or Horizontal Plain of your work, would take off more of that Angle, or Edge, which rises higher than the Plain; so that one Angle being higher, or lower, than the other, your work instead of being filed square, would be filed Square-wise, when you shall have filed all its flat fides, and that more or less, according to the leaning of the *Chaps* of your *Vice*. AA the *Face*, hath its two ends in a straight Line with the middle of its *Face*, or *Plain*. B the *Chaps* must be cut with a Bastard Cut, and very well tempered; C the *Screw Pin*, cut with square strong Worm. D the *Nut*, or *Screw Box*, hath also a square *Worm*, and is brazed into the round *Box*. E the *Spring* must be made of good Steel, and very well temper'd: Where note that the wider the two ends of the *Spring* stand afunder, the wider it throws the *Chaps* of the *Vice* open. F the *Foot* must be straight, and therefore will be the stronger to bear good heavy blows upon the work screwed in the *Chaps* of the *Vice*, that it neither bow, or tremble.

### Of the Hand-Vice.

Of the *Hand-Vice* are two Sorts, one is called the *Broad Chapt Hand-Vice*, the other the *Square Nof'd Hand-Vice*. The Office of the *Hand-Vice*, is to hold small work in, that may require often turning about; it is held in the left hand, and each part of your work turned upwards successively, that you have occasion to file with your right. The *Square-nof'd Hand-Vice* is seldom used, but for filing small Globulous Work, as the Heads of Pins that round off towards the Edges, &c. And that because the *Chaps* do not stand shouldering in the way but that the flat of the *File* may the better come at the Edges. Their *Chaps* must be cut as the *Vice* afore said, and well tempered.



